

*Library of Parliament—Reopening*

protection methods and materials. One thing led to another and what was first estimated to be a \$1 million project came to involve an expenditure of approximately \$2½ million. This is usually the case when large-scale renovations of old buildings are undertaken. But today we see the worth-while results of that expenditure. I am grateful to those members of the press who have conducted their own investigations and reported so favourably upon the quality of the work that has been done. This is one of the rewards for painstaking efforts to rehabilitate the library of parliament, to maintain the integrity of design and the ideas which were in the minds of the original architects and builders.

Canadians today are deeply aware of the value of our historic relics, and I am pleased that the Department of Public Works was able to play a role in restoring this fine old structure to the point where you can see it here today, faithfully reproduced, true and unaltered, but strengthened to endure the ravages of accident and time.

Of course it is not yet fully finished. In due course, for example, you will see better and more appropriate furniture in its main reading room. Other finishing touches need to be added, but in the meantime it gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Department of Public Works, the architects and builders, the prime contractors, the subcontractors and all who have laboured so carefully and efficiently, to turn over to your care again, Messrs. Speakers, this beautiful and beloved old library of parliament so that it may render further service to the people of Canada.

**Hon. L. René Beaudoin (Speaker of the House of Commons):** Ladies and gentlemen, His Excellency the Governor General of Canada.

**Right Hon. Vincent Massey (Governor General of Canada):** Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker of the Senate, Mr. Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr. Winters, ladies and gentlemen:

I greatly appreciate the privilege you have given me this afternoon. This is a very important event for all of us, the restoration and reopening of this historic building. It is easy to build a new structure, but it takes faith and courage and a true feeling for the past to treasure and restore an old one such as this. It is not what the architects of today would design for a modern library. It is not streamlined. It is not functional. It has no new look, but it has a very good old look. It is the kind of library that our founding fathers were proud to set on this hill, which was to be the scene of a nation's deliberations.

*(Translation):*

The library of parliament is but one of that large number of institutions which illustrate so well the bilingual character of this country. Among these innumerable works, covering such a wide variety of subjects, there are many which relate, in both our official languages, the history of our nation.

This library, used by representatives of French and English Canada, constitutes, as it were, an official link between Canadians of differing languages. Within its walls, it assembles works which bear upon every aspect of our Canadian life.

We are happy to note that it has been perfectly restored and that it is once more capable of performing, on behalf of our country, the important service expected of it.

*(Text):*

This library is a Victorian building. Old Ottawa, what is left of it, is a Victorian city. Its architecture expresses many of the qualities of that great era, and reflects a romantic feeling for the past. Such buildings should not, of course, be reproduced or imitated, but when surviving examples are preserved, they give us precious links with our beginnings.

This institution has had a chequered history; legislative libraries in Canada seem often to have had troubled careers. Two were burned, one at York in 1813 as a result of invasion, and the other at Montreal in the riots of 1849. As we have been reminded, this building was menaced dangerously by the great fire of 1916, but it was saved, as we have been told, by a prompt decision on the part of one of the staff when he closed the steel doors without a moment's warning, and as several members of parliament were at the time in the library, they found themselves, to their surprise, locked in with the books. All were equally safe.

This library was opened in 1876 by one of my predecessors, Lord Dufferin. In the intervening eighty years its services have been of immeasurable importance, and we owe much to the men who have directed its work. Many of these have not been only the custodians of books, but the lovers of books. Some indeed, by their own effort, have contributed ably to our national literature.

I hope that this day will mark the reinvigoration of a great national institution. To those who have been concerned in its restoration, and to the staff who will again carry on in these precincts their invaluable but onerous work, I offer my warmest congratulations and best wishes.

I now have much pleasure in declaring the library of parliament officially reopened.